



County of Los Angeles
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

May 23, 2007

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich
From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

YVONNE B. BURKE
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

SATELLITE EMERGENCY TECHNOLOGY-PROJECT 010-07

This memo is in response to your request at the May 8, 2007 Board meeting to report back on the utilization of satellite technology as opposed to towers for emergency communication.

In order to ensure effective emergency communication, in response to all hazards, Los Angeles County uses both satellite and terrestrial (towers) communication systems. Satellite communications are not intended to be a "Stand-alone" or replacement system for terrestrial communications. Both systems augment each other to ensure maximum effectiveness.

Some of the current satellite-based systems used by the County include:

- The Emergency Management Information System (EMIS). EMIS is a computer based communication tool used by County departments, cities, State representatives and non-profits to communicate and provide status reports during an emergency.
- The County Emergency Operations Center (CEOC) also has satellite capability through the Operational Area Satellite Information System (OASIS). OASIS provides a direct link to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services and other government entities throughout the state. OASIS also provides several lines of telephone and high speed data with video capability.
- Select County departments, including OEM, also utilize satellite telephones as back-up communications for emergencies.

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Terrestrial systems play a vital role in communications and are used to support day-to-day routine communications. Cellular telephones, Public Safety dispatch or any type of communication system where the signal does not have a direct line of sight with a clear unobstructed view to the satellite must rely on terrestrial systems for adequate signal strength and building penetration. Should terrestrial systems fail, back-up communications are conducted through mobile communications vehicles such as the Sheriff's Interoperability Communications Unit (ICU), County Disaster Communication Service (DCS), and satellite systems.

Los Angeles County uses a combination of satellite and terrestrial-based systems with redundancy to minimize the risk of a total communication failure following a major emergency. Both systems compliment each other well.

I hope this response addresses your concerns over this matter. Please contact Michael Hooper, from my Office of Emergency Management, at (323) 980-2255 if you have any further questions.

DEJ:MJB
MH:cm